

Songs of Faith

by

Grace Noll Crowell



HARPER & BROTHERS

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Songs of Faith

By

GRACE NOLL
CROWELL

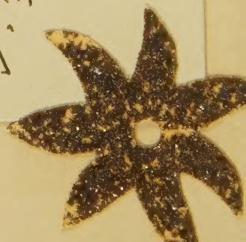
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SONGS OF FAITH

†

By the Same Author



SILVER IN THE SUN
FLAME IN THE WIND
SONGS FOR COURAGE
MISS HUMPETY COMES TO TEA
THIS GOLDEN SUMMIT
LIGHT OF THE YEARS
SONGS OF HOPE
WHITE FIRE



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SONGS OF FAITH

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Second Edition

L-O

TO
THE MOTHERS OF AMERICA

*Who love their God, their families and their homes,
their country and their friends,
Who have Striven, even as I have Striven, day by day
to do their best in the place allotted them,
This little book is affectionately dedicated*

†

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SONGS OF FAITH

Today

I HEARD God's voice upon the wind today;
I heard Him speaking through the song of birds;
And clearly, plainly, through the silver rain
I heard His words.

I saw God's face upon a flower today;
I saw Him moving on the hills, and oh,
He walked upon the water of the stream,
I know! I know!

I heard God's voice, I saw His shining face;
He spoke to me; He moved along the land;
I reached through all the beauty of the day
And touched His hand.

The Silver Fire

BY FAITH I drink the water in my cup;
I breathe the air and trust that it is pure;
The bread I break at evening as I sup
I take believing that the loaf is sure
To be quite clean. At night I go to sleep
And journey through a strange and darkened land,
With confidence that God has power to keep
His never-failing hold upon my hand.

By faith I rise to meet my busy day.
Sure of the sun, I plant and hoe my seed,
Knowing that rain and light will take their way
Across the earth, that my immediate need
For food will be supplied. By faith I go
Trusting in God and in my fellow-men,
And if at times that silver fire burns low,
It never fails to lift and burn again.

Many Infallible Proofs

O H, many there are, but in my heart alone
There are a thousand shining proofs that
Christ

Is a living force today, for I have known
The white infallible ones that have sufficed
To blot away all doubt: He is so near
That I can touch Him with my reaching hand;
He is so close to me that I can hear
Him speak the simple words I understand.

"Many infallible proofs," He showed to them
As they walked and talked with Him on His earthly
way;

But I have often touched His garment's hem,
And felt His healing power as well as they.
Oh, not alone to them came proof on proof—
He shares my loaf, He lives beneath my roof!

Thirty-Three Years

HOW young He was, how short His time on
earth!

A pulse-beat through the centuries, a breath
Between the starlit hour of His birth
And that strange darkened hour of His death.

Yet had those years not gone their swift sure way,
Had their significance been lost to men,
There would be darkness in the land today,
No faith would lift, no heart could hope again.

Thank God, thank God for those years' precious
store!

Thank God for sparing Him to you, to me,
"Out of the glory that was theirs before
The world was . . ." and the glory yet to be.

The darkened years for Him, that brought us light;
The weary years for Him, that gave us rest;
The clamorous years, that we might know the white
High silences of peace within the breast.

For thirty-three brief years that His feet trod
The earthly roads for us, we thank Thee, God.

A Staff within My Hand

I SHALL walk upon the hills of life today;
I shall don my cloak of laughter, and shall
choose

From among my garments a red scarf for cheer,
A blue beret for courage, and my shoes
Must be Hope's sturdiest that I may climb
Unflinching up the peaks of time.

And oh, the staff I carry must be strong,
A rugged staff that my own hands have made,
Cutting it from the hardy tree of life
And carving it deeply with my shining blade:
The staff of faith, no other eyes can see,
But daily, hourly, it companions me.

I shall walk upon the hills today and take
A staff within my hands that will not break.

Tribute

AND DAVID, AFTER HE HAD SERVED HIS OWN
GENERATION . . . FELL ON SLEEP. *Acts 13:36.*

NO finer tribute ever could be given
Than that brief simple utterance of praise.
God asks no greater service than this heaven
To raise the standard of men's earthly days.
David, the king, "had served his generation" —
Straightforward words that shine in his behalf,
More challenging in their adulation
Than any chiseled-marble epitaph.

To serve one's generation, to be giving
New strength and courage to one's fellow-man,
To tread life's highroad bravely, ever living
With one clear purpose, one exalted plan,
Will rear for any man a shaft so high
Its climbing peak will reach and pierce the sky.

"The Armour of Light"

THIS is a garment that if rightly worn
Will be as radiant as the sun at dawn.
It is a splendid cloak that will adorn
The plainest one who gladly puts it on.
It will be pierced with some strange inward light:
An incandescent burning that will glow
As if a lamp were carried in the night
Wherever they, who don that armour, go.

Friend, let us put it on and walk the lands
To help illuminate earth's darkened ways:
Our faces glowing, torches in our hands,
Before our feet the ever-spreading rays
Of hope and gladness, that the world may see
The Holy Spirit's luminosity.

There Still Are Mothers

W HATEVER else be lost along the way
There still are Christian mothers in all
lands

Acknowledging a higher power than they:
These queens who have no scepter in their hands
And yet who reign upon a firmer throne
Than any that the earth has ever known.

Rulers of life itself, with love as pure
And true and selfless as the old earth knows,
Their trust in God unshakable and sure,
Their faith implanted in their children grows
Into a living, lifting, shining thing
That through life's stress can know no conquering.

There still are mothers who will ever hold
The old sweet ways of truth and righteousness
Before their children's eyes, who long have told
Christ's teachings to their young to heal and bless.
Thank God for any mother, anywhere,
Who loves and serves, and finds her strength in
prayer.

Faith

FAITH takes on the look of silver things:
A shimmering path at night across the sea,
The points of stars, the silver tips of wings,
The white, still luminosity
Of gabled rooftops when the moon shines down
The streets of any town.

Faith is a silvered brightness in the soul:
A shaft set there to point the way to heaven,
And carved upon it is a lettered scroll,
Its words miraculously given
To guide the traveler on his shining way
Upon the road today.

God help me keep my faith undimmed by tears,
And uncorroded by the rust of years.

Promises

THE year will keep its promises to me:
Unfailingly the days will come and go;
Rivers will take their sure course to the sea;
Seedtime and harvest, these will come, I know.
The stars will go their quiet silver way;
There will be sun and rain and wind and dew;
There will be breathless beauty in each day;
There will be old loved tasks for me to do.

And I have made my promise to the year
(God help me keep it through the hours ahead):
I shall be braver, I shall banish fear;
I shall not leave a kindly word unsaid;
I shall have faith that this, my ancient grief,
Will yield at last to laughter and to song;
I shall have hope that there will be relief
For the old hurts the world has borne so long.

The year will keep its promise. O my heart,
We must not, dare not fail to do our part.

Evening Prayer

THIS is a holy time—be still, be still;
A child's white prayer is winging its sure
way

Up to the throne of God. Across the sill
The last red light fades from the winter day,
As a young mother who is very wise
Is teaching a child to pray.

Two tall white candles burn beside her chair,
Piercing the dusk; they center in the eyes
Of the kneeling child like twin stars shining there;
They glimmer through the twilight of the room,
And make a halo of the mother's hair.

Brighter than the candles or the sunset light
Will be the fruit born of this precious hour.
The planted seed of faith will bear a white
Incredible flower,
And trust implanted in a child's heart may
Bear wonder-fruit some future day.
Oh, teach her well to pray!

"Loveſt Thou Me?"

WISTFULLY Chriſt's grave insiſtent
voice
Is borne across the centuries, and we
Who hear muſt answer, and muſt make a choice:
"Loveſt thou me?"

"Yea, Lord, we love Thee," quick we make reply.
Then—"Feed my ſheep," He ſays, and clear and
plain
Along the ether ways of earth and ſky
The voice ſounds out again:

"Loveſt thou me?" He queſtions us, O friends,
And may we answer truthfully today:
"Yea, Lord," for all eternity depends
On what we ſay.

Prayer Power

YOUR prayers have comforted me, friend,
Through many a day;
When strength has failed me, then I know
That you will pray;
When any hurt becomes too great
For me to bear,
I feel it ease, remembering
Your power in prayer.

"I shall pray for you each day," you said,
"My voice shall lift
In your behalf. . . ." O friend of mine,
There is no gift
Though you should search the wide world through
That can compare
With the precious, shining, white weight
Of your prayer!

"Pray one for another," we are told.
I, too, shall pray
For you, and for each troubled heart
In need today.

Miracles

THEY sought the Master's healing touch,
They followed Him down lane and field,
And every ailing, seeking one
Who came to Him was healed.

O Master, still today we come:
The great throngs down the earthly roads,
We bear our sorrow and our pain,
We stoop beneath our heavy loads.

We pray, and often grief is stilled,
And pain becomes a strange, past thing;
Our loads are lifted, many times
Even from our remembering.

And these are miracles as great
As those far ones on sea and land.
All healing, all release, dear Lord,
Comes from Thy hand, Thy unseen hand.

Because Men Plow

SO many furrows in so many lands,
So many plows beneath men's guiding hands,
And lo! the old earth's surface has been tilled.
To meet the world's need, granaries are filled
With corn and wheat and rye from countless fields.
Because men plow, there are these golden yields;
Because their silver shares have pierced the sod
And they have worked together with their God,
The hungry world has food enough to eat
If we share wisely—and shared loaves are sweet.
The plows go down the land, the furrows run
Forever curved and deep beneath the sun:
The ancient furrows, and the fresh-turned furrows
now—
There will be bread while men have faith to plow.
We thank Thee, God, for the heartening thought
of men
Sowing and plowing and reaping, to plant again.

These Brave Ones

I MARK the men and women every day
Who pass my door, or whom I hourly meet,
And there are few who, journeying on the way,
Fail to do their best. Although their feet
May falter with the burdens that they bear,
There are so few who break beneath despair.

They face their days with confidence and cheer,
Grateful for work, if there be work to do,
And if that work be lost they fight their fear
With courage, and with hope which they renew
At the clear source from which all comfort springs:
God's promises, and the old rememberings

That hitherto the Lord has blessed, and now
Surely there will be found a way again
To usefulness and service, that somehow
The paths will clear among the ways of men,
And the crooked places once more will be straight.
God, keep these brave ones as they hope and wait.

This Day Belongs to God

THIS is the day the Lord hath made . . . ”
His workmanship: the dawn, the light, the
shade

The wind, the rain, the starshine and the dew.
He loans its hours, for me to live them through
Joyfully and gladly without lack;
And then at nightfall, bids me bring them back
And lay them at His feet that He may see
I have lived worthily.

God grant I be deserving of this day.
A child's heart proves its gladness in its play;
The little wild birds, as they sing and fly,
And I, who am so blest, why should not I
Go singing, light of heart, no matter what
The hours may hold for me? My grief forgot,
And suffering and loss that I have had—
Today I shall be glad.

Christlike

THIS is a Christlike thing: to bear a grief
Unspoken and unshared, yet go one's
way

Not feverishly seeking for relief,
But day by day
Doing the tasks at hand to cheer and bless,
That others may find greater happiness.

This is a Christlike thing: through wearing pain
To keep quite still, that watching, none may see
The weariness, the harrowing stress and strain,
The agony,
But wearing always something of Christ's grace
And infinite patience written on one's face.

For the Master bore His agony alone,
And bore it well,
And the greatest grief a heart has ever known,
He did not tell.

In Many Tongues

HE WHO has suffered much speaks many
tongues.

He can be understood—he understands
The language of the countless ones who reach
For sympathy with weak imploring hands.
To each in his own tongue he has the words
That bring the quick relief of tears—he speaks
And suddenly old heavy burdens lift,
And there is hope again for him who seeks.

O you who have grown weary of your load,
Shoulder it bravely again a little while.
There will be those who will require of you
Help to go some first bewildering mile
With grief or pain—God will have need of you
As His interpreter that you may tell
Them of the hope ahead, of the healing years,
And of His love—oh, learn the language well!

A Remedy for Care

CONSIDER the lilies of the field,"
"Behold the birds of the air,"
Thus the Master has given us
A cure for care.

Birds do not sow, they do not reap,
Nor gather their stores ahead;
But out of the loving hands of God
They are fed.

The lilies that neither toil nor spin
Stand silken-robed on their stem,
Beautifully garmented; for God
Is clothing them.

"O ye of little faith," said One
Who loves us our lifetime through.
Should we not know that He will feed
And clothe us, too?

Tall White Tapers

TRUTH and beauty glow from this old Book
Like tall white tapers set to light the way;
O hearts distressed and burdened, if we look,
There is a light for every darkened day
Here in the living truth, before our eyes,
To cheer and comfort, and to make us wise.

These are the words of others who have known
Great tribulation, whose bright faith was lit
Out in the dark, and there with God alone
They found His love—the power and strength of it;
They found His everlasting arms and laid
Their burdens in them, and were unafraid.

So we should come, in this bewilderment,
To take the hand that, somehow, we have lost,
Like children groping through the dark, and spent
With things for which we paid too high a cost.
Conning the old Book over, there we find
The light to which we long have been too blind.

Comfort

SO often Thou haſt comforted me, Lord,
Through the glowing warmth and fire of Thy
word;

So often I have found new hope to climb
A long, ſteep hill, a difficult ſlope of time,
Because ſome fellow-traveler has called back
A word of cheer along a beaten track.

And oh, the written words that have been part
Of many a writer's living, pulſing heart!
They have lighted a high torch within my hand
That I have carried with me down the land.
Dear Lord, I pray Thee, uſe the lines I write
To light the way for ſomeone in the night,
And take the words I ſay, thoſe I have ſaid,
To comfort hearts as mine is comforted.

Some Better Thing

O HEART, if seemingly God has not answered
Some anguished cry, some earnest seeking prayer,

Do not rebel and say, "He is not mindful."
And, O dear heart, try never to despair.
Although the words themselves be left unuttered,
Through agony too great for tongue to say,
Even the unvoiced prayer He hears and answers,
If not in your way—in some better way.

"Some better thing," He promises to give you:
Better than you could ask or think. Be still
And wait and hope and trust, for in that giving
Will be the answer to His blessed will.
Far more than any prayer that you could bring
He will encompass in that "better thing."

He Thanks Thee Best

HE thanks Thee best who serves Thee best:
Who meets each glowing day
With grateful hearts and lifted face,
To toil and rest and play.

He thanks Thee best who loves Thee best:
And loving, loves each one
Who passes down the old highroad
From sun to setting sun.

He thanks Thee best who trusts Thee best:
Whose faith shines through the dark,
A helpful, happy, hopeful thing
For way-tired hearts to mark.

He thanks Thee best who worships best:
Who prays where none may see,
Who humbly waits to hear Thy voice—
Who has no God but Thee.

The Great Secret

THERE is a power only those can know
Whose feet have climbed to some far Cal-
vary,

Where all the winding roads of suffering go,
With the gentle Christ companioning us, and He
Bearing upon His back a heavier cross
Than ever could be ours through pain or loss.

There is a secret to be learned through suffering:
His sympathy, his patient, gentle grace,
And pain borne bravely never fails to bring
The high white look of Christ to any face.
At every cross of sorrow and despair
We learn the secret God's own Son learned there.

It Is Yet Early

HERE is the thing to keep remembering,
You who are weeping in the shadowed
gloom:

"It was yet early," when they came to bring
The spices to the tomb.

"It was yet early," and they found Him gone!
Their grief was darker than the darkest night;
"It was yet early," but somewhere the dawn
Was marching with its light.

They could not see—the garden was too dim
(Tears are so blinding, grief so hard to bear!)—
Yet, in the shadows that were holding Him,
The Lord was standing there.

Here in the garden of your grief, and mine,
It is yet early—long before the day.
There is no sun or moon or star to shine
Across the darkened way.

Yet, O my friends, perhaps for you and me
The dawn will bring some joy we thought long
 dead,
And that which seems but shadows now, may be
The risen Lord, instead.

The Risen Lord

I TRUST when I first see Him it will be
In some bright meadow of Eternity.
I think I would be shy before a throne
With Him upon it, for I have not known
The ways of kings and kingdoms. I have run
Too often through green pastures in the sun
To want to lose them, and I think He, too,
Must still love meadows as He used to do,
And fields and little clearings down the land.
I trust that first day I shall see Him stand
Among the blowing grasses of the sky,
The wild flowers tossing at His feet, the high
Clouds swift above Him, and the glittering birds
Wheeling and singing out their silver words.
If I could see Him thus, I would not be
Afraid at all. He would be 'waiting me,
And I would run to Him across the loam
As a glad child meets its father coming home.

"Come See a Man—"

COME see a man," the Nazareth lads would
say,
And peering through an old shop's open
door,

Would watch One swing an adz, see muscles play
Like rippling steel, and mark along the floor
Huge timbers that a driven saw and plane
Had smoothed and polished to its bright clear grain.

"Come see a man," the word ran like a fire
Down every street and every crooked lane,
And throngs besought Him, wild with their desire
To rid themselves of agonizing pain.

"Come see a man whose power is strange, and such,
His hands alone can heal men with its touch."

Samaria, and noon above the land—
A flushed-cheeked woman, hurrying to tell,
With strange excited voice and lifted hand,
Of One who waited by an ancient well.

"Come see a man who told me everything. . . ."
Surely this is our long awaited King!

"Come see a man," the cry still rings today,
"Who knows no fear at all, so brave is He."
So strong and clean, He went His quiet way
To climb at last the hill called Calvary,
There to be lifted that a whole world might
Be drawn to Him: its Saviour and its Light.

Let Us Not Forget

LET us not forget the ancient wisdom
With which our fathers walked their earthly
days:

The saying of grace above a loaf, new-broken,
The Sabbath rest, the altars we should raise;
The teaching of our faith to these, our children,
The earnest study of God's holy Word;
The telling, again and again, the old sweet story
By which an apathetic world is stirred.

Let us not forget the ancient splendors:
The mountain-top experience that lights
The darkest valleys that our feet must travel,
Where God will be, as well as on the heights.
Let us not forget the old, old meaning
Of the sun and moon and stars above the land.
Considering these—God help us to remember
That we, like they, are held in Thy great hand.

It Takes So Little

IT takes so little to put back the heart
In any one: a loving word of praise,
Uttered sincerely, oftentimes may start
A light like sunshine running through the days.

It takes so little when the heart is sad
To lift it up—some bright encouragement
May reach the sorrowing one and make him glad,
Even when seemingly all hope is spent.

It takes so little, why should we withhold
That precious thing within our power to give?
Love, like a warm garment in the cold,
And sympathy for others while we live?

It takes so little, ah, dear God, I pray,
Help us to give it wisely day by day.

True Praise

HE who has lived each shining day's duration
As best he could,
Who meets the dawn and views it with
elation
And finds it good,

Whose eyes are lifted to the high-noon glory
Of sky and sun,
Whose ears are tuned to catch earth's old sweet
story
When day is done—

I think his God accepts it as high tribute,
As honest praise,
This sane, light-hearted, trusting way of living
His gift of days.
For being glad is one sure way of praying
As on men trod,
And happiness, a certain way of saying:
"We thank Thee, God."

The Mosaic

HE who lives the Christ life day by day
Unknowingly creates a wonder-thing:
A beautiful mosaic, a bouquet
Of jewels set in gold, an offering
To place within God's hands when life is done:
A brave resplendent thing of light and shade,
Each little priceless jewel, one by one,
In a design that life itself has made.

And God will note the lovely inset gems,
Will mark the glowing rubies that are prayers,
The amethysts of patience, the clear stems
Of jade, where courage has outlived despairs,
The diamonds that are faith, the topaz light
Of hope that shone across the darkest days,
And surely He will take that little bright
Mosaic to His heart with words of praise.

The Test

WE cannot understand why He delays
So often in His coming to our door,
But oh, recall . . . He tarried two long
days

And Lazarus dead! He knew the grief they bore,
And then He came, and all was well again.
He will come to us, dear hearts, as He came then.

Often He allows our little boats
To be dashed sadly on a stormy sea;
But oh, let us remember that He notes
Our terror and our toil, and surely He
Will move through the dark watches and speak
Peace.

After He tries our faith the storms will cease.

And ah, the long unanswered prayers! We wait,
We hope and trust, too often we despair,
And all the while those prayers accumulate
Within His loving heart; He holds them there,
Testing our trust . . . then, certain as the sun
Follows the night, He answers every one.

The Quiet Night

WHAT is death but a quiet night of sleeping:

All weariness forgotten, and all pain,
Our eyelids closed and shaken of their weeping,
Our bodies waiting strength to come again.
We say good-night to our beloved, then turning,
Go through the shadowy hall and up the stair,
The little light goes out that has been burning,
We watch the stars beyond the window square,
Then, soft as nightfall on the meadow flowers,
Sleep comes and bears us dreamlessly away,
And rest is sweet though long or short the hours,
Until we waken, and again 'tis day,
With its bright glory, and its sudden splendor,
And, dazzled by the golden light that spills,
We will arise, all lithe and strong and slender,
And young again, to climb the golden hills.



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Grace Noll Crowell:

The Poet and the Woman

By
BEATRICE PLUMB

This story of Mrs. Crowell's life has been written because of the stream of requests coming from women's clubs, churches and schools. Miss Plumb has written this short biography with the facility and understanding that characterized the magazine articles on Mrs. Crowell which she wrote for the *Christian Herald* and the *American Home*.

This little book also contains two pictures of Mrs. Crowell, a foreword by her and nine poems relating to her life which have heretofore not been published in book form.

HARPER & BROTHERS
Publishers

Volumes of Poetry by
GRACE NOLL CROWELL

Songs of Faith

Songs of Hope

This Golden Summit

Light of the Years

Songs for Courage

Miss Humpety Comes to Tea

Flame in the Wind

White Fire

Silver in the Sun

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